# HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA <u>INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION</u> <u>SOUTHERN SECTION</u> <u>(CIFSS)</u>

17<sup>th</sup> historical "tidbit." John S. Dahlem, Ph.D.



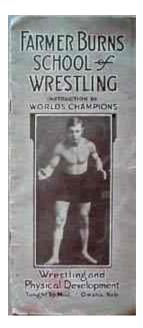
THE LONG ROAD TO CIFSS RECOGNITION FOR THE SPORT OF

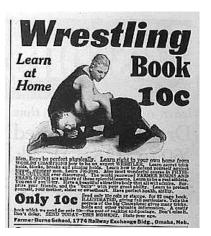
# WRESTLING

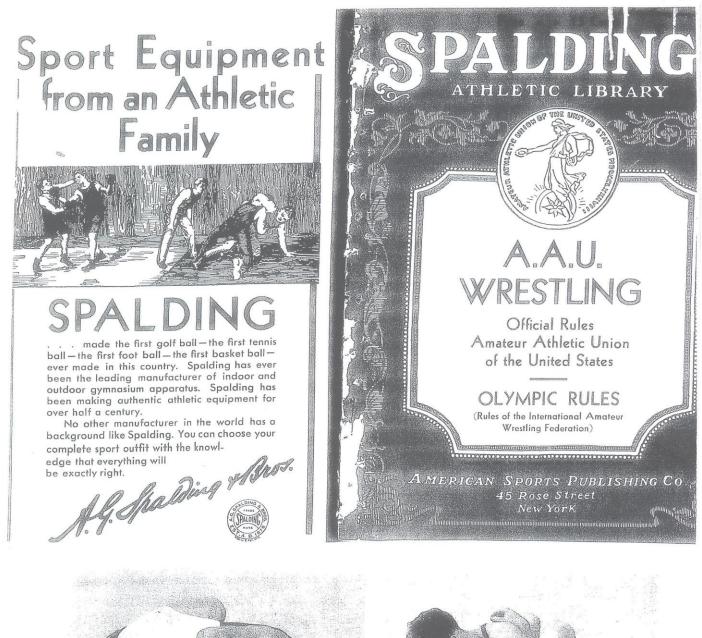
Early 1920's advertisements for amateur wrestling:

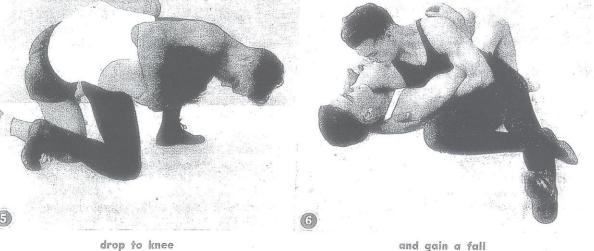












drop to knee



The early years of the CIFSS were centered mainly on the sport of track and field. Most of the early minutes of Council meetings were directed toward eligibility cases and how to run the annual track meet. Several other sports gained official sanctioning by the CIFSS when meet managers were assigned to those sports including football, basketball, swimming, water polo, baseball and tennis. Many of the sports were informal and played at the schools as intra mural activities or between schools without official approval of the CIFSS. Some sports, such as gymnastics and handball, were played in physical education classes without interscholastic competition. Reference can be found of wrestling in Los Angeles in 1892, when the Los Angeles Athletic Club showcased an athletic exhibition of, "boxing set-tos between the cleverest amateurs, wrestling bouts, club swinging and gymnastic feats of all kinds." Wrestling began to gain some popularity in high school gym classes during the 1920's because it was inexpensive (this is the time of the depression) and met the needs of boys who were smaller. Fortunately, for smaller athletes, a whole system of equitable weight classes allowed students to play 110 pound and 140 pound basketball along with lower weight football teams. The largest problem that faced wrestling was the fact that it was associated with *boxing's* violent side and many felt it was a too "rough a sport."

The first reference to wrestling in the Council and Executive Committee meetings is found in the minutes of April 24, 1926,

"8. WRESTLING MADE C.I.F. SPORT It was moved by Moore, and seconded by Owen, and carried, that we hold a Southern California wrestling tournament in April, 1927, and that Mr. Ferrell of Long Beach be appointed Wrestling Manager for the school year 1926."

It is interesting to note that a Championship Wrestling Tournament was held at Long Beach Poly in April of 1926, but was not official. From those minutes you would think wrestling was on its way to becoming a sanctioned sport....<u>WRONG!</u> It would take another ten years before that happened. Long Beach Poly and Whittier High School dominated this first tournament winning all the weight classes between the two schools. In 1926 there were eight weight classes. There were still some feelings of uneasiness about wrestling and in the October 4, 1930, Council meeting it was noted that, "M. L. R. Ardouin, chairman of the Wrestling Committee of the A.A.U., addressed the Council on the benefits of wrestling as a sport and body builder. He urged the CIFSS to give wrestling a regular place on the interscholastic sports calendar (sanctioning). The President referred the matter to the Executive Committee for study and report." The answer came in the April 2, 1932, meeting with the following:

"17. Moved by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Cline, that the subject of wrestling remain in *status quo*. Carried."

The State CIF also had their doubts about wrestling when their November 19, 1932 minutes reminded the principals, "...that any boy who takes part in a boxing or wrestling match, not under the direct control of his school, shall be debarred from further High School athletic competition of any kind." It seemed that wrestling would continue as an unofficial sport between local schools who wanted to participate without the total acceptance of the CIFSS.

The local wrestling community was encouraged with the following from the April 27, 1935, Council minutes:

"8. Mr. Earl Chapman, Dean of Boys at Whittier High School, reported on a invitational wrestling Tournament sanctioned by the CIFSS and held recently at his school. He recommended that the CIFSS hold a wrestling championship each year. Chair appointed Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Chapman, and Mr. Roy Moore, Wrestling Coach at Inglewood High School, to the committee."

The CIFSS now sanctioned the tournament and it should follow that they would sanction the sport of wrestling...<u>WRONG</u>! The answer to why CIFSS still did not want to anoint wrestling came from the Commissioner in the February 1, 1936, minutes:

#### WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

"It was pointed out to the Executive Committee by the Commissioner of Athletics that all wrestling and boxing within the State of California where an admission fee is charged must be under the control of the State Athletic Commission. Since the CIFSS under no circumstances is willing to have its athletic activities controlled by any other organization the Executive Committee directed that there be no boxing or wrestling activities carried on under the supervision of the CIFSS Office." Wrestling was now caught up in the politics of control over interscholastic sports. Fortunately, one year later, wrestling was finally accepted into the official sanctioned sports of CIFSS with the following annotation from the February 6, 1937, Council minutes:

"14. Mr. Van Patten read a letter from State Supervisor W. H. Orion stating that the State of California Legislature had amended the state law taking boxing and wrestling in college and high school out of the control of the State Athletic Commission and giving it back to the schools.

Mr. Van Patten recommended that our wrestling committee of last year be continued and be directed to arrange a wrestling championship if schools conducting the sport desired it. If such a championship be arranged that plans be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

There being no objection the Chair ruled the recommendations approved."

## FINALLY

The first <u>official</u> CIFSS Wrestling Championship held in 1937, was won by San Diego High School coached by Frank Crosby and Whittier High School, as it was in 1926, was the runner-up. The 1937, the financial report stated that entry fees for the tournament had netted \$10.00 and the medals cost \$18.08.

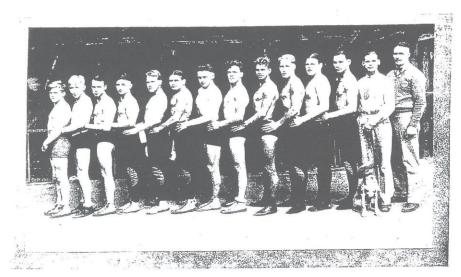
The dominate teams in the early years of wrestling (1926 to 1937) were Whittier and San Diego High Schools. From 1938 to 1954, San Diego High School was either the champion or runner-up all under Frank Crosby.





## FIRST "UNOFFICIAL" CIFSS WRESTLING CHAMPIONS LONG BEACH POLY HIGH SCHOOL - 1926 LONG BEACH GYMNASIUM

#### <u>SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA INTERSCHOLASTIC WRESTLING TOURNAMENT</u> (Wrestling became an officially sanctioned CIFSS sport in 1937)



WRESTLING

NE of the biggest special events on the Poly sport calendar was the staging of the first annual Southern California Interscholastic Champion-

ship Wrestling Tournament in the Long Beach gymnasium. The local team of grapplers in taking six out of the nine championships annexed the Southern California title for Poly High.

Several practice meets were staged with different college teams in order to prepare the boys for a stiff season. Only three league matches were staged besides the championship tourney. In the first affair, Long Beach won six out of eight bouts from Glendale in the inland gym. The Jackrabbit grapplers completely swamped the Alhambra team in the second league battle, winning all of the eight bouts. In the local gymnasium after the championships had been decided, Long Beach defeated Whittier five out of seven and ended a perfect season.

"Frenchy" Brisson captained the team and showed the best individual form of all the boys throughout the year. Joe Schurter was the lightest man to take a Southern California Championship medal. He won the 126pound division in the tourney. Captain Brisson annexed the 135-pound honors and Al Maloney took the 147-pound classification. Cliff Thiede was the winner in the 160-pound class and Bill Artman took two medals to his credit. These were in the 175-pound championship and in the unlimited division. Bob Campbell was manager of the team.

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"Frenchy"

Year	Wt	Wrestler/School
1926	108	Ed Parsons, Whittier
	112	Glenn Cooper, Whittier
	118	Glenn Cooper, Whittier
	126	Joe Schurtner, Long Beach Poly
	135	Frenchy Brisson, Long Beach Poly
	147	Al Maloney, Long Beach Poly
	160	Cliff Thierde, Long Beach Poly
	175	Bill Artman, Long Beach Poly
	Hwt.	Bill Artman, Long Beach Poly

#### ALL-TIME CIF-SS TEAM WRESTLING CHAMPIONS

Year 1926 Div.

Champion (Score) Long Beach Poly (24) Head Coach Orville Ferrell Runner-up (Score) Whittier (15)

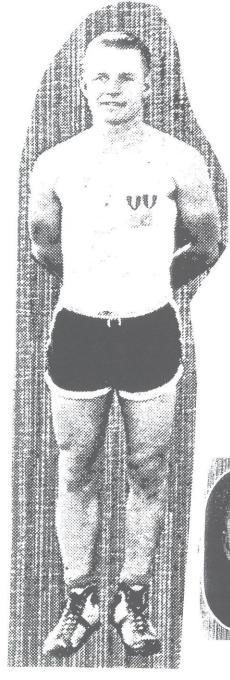


## <u>GLENN COOPER</u> <u>WHITTIER HIGH SCHOOL</u> <u>1926-1927</u>

Champion of the 112 and 118 pound classes in 1926 Champion of the 120 and 127 pound classes in 1927











### Glenn Cooper

"No sinner nor no saint perhaps, But well, the very best of chaps,"

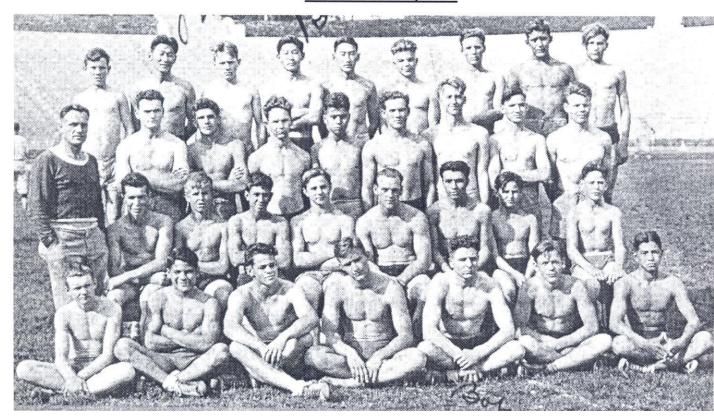
# FIRST CIF-SS WRESTLING COACH HERO

# <u>FRANK CROSBY</u> SAN DIEGO HIGH SCHOOL

Between 1930 and 1954, Frank Crosby won 15 CIF-SS titles and was second 9 <u>times</u>



<u>1933 San Diego High School Wrestling Team</u> <u>CIF-SS Champions</u>



#### EARLY HISTORY OF WRESTLING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

In Southern California, wrestling on the high school level has existed for approximately 43 years. The sport did not really attain prominence until after World War II. Competitive wrestling began in the early 20's and seemingly was embarked upon a path of mediocrity, obscurity and even extinction. Somehow in spite of many obstacles, it managed to survive and today shows promise of becoming one of the most promising sports on the high school level. One of the first schools to initiate a program of wrestling was Long Beach Polytechnic High School in 1920, when a wrestling club was formed. In 1923 this school formed its first team and scheduled a wrestling match with the University of Southern California.

The first high school wrestling meet was held between Long Beach Poly and Whittier High Schools during the 1924 season. Following this, other schools developed an interest in wrestling as a sport, and in 1926 a meeting was held at Whittier High School for the purpose of forming a wrestling league.

The first championship tournament of the newly formed league was held in April, 1926, at Long Beach Poly High School. There were entries from fifteen schools divided into seven weight classes. The preliminary matches were six minutes in length and the finals, nine minutes. All matches were decided by the best two out of three falls. L.B. Poly won the tournament with Whittier placing second.

The CIF, SS became concerned with the status of wrestling at this time, and at a Southern Section meeting it was decided to hold a Southern

California Wrestling Tournament in April, 1927. This tournament, however, was not supervised by the CIF, SS, for the reason that any contest of boxing or wrestling within the high schools was illegal at this time because of a State law which placed these sports under the jurisdiction of the State Athletic Commission. Consequently, the CIF, SS sanctioned wrestling as an interscholastic sport but did not control to any great degree the annual championship tournament.

The following results are from 1927 through 1936, when the CIF, Southern Section sanctioned but did not control high school wrestling: 1927—San Diego HS at Whittier HS
1928—San Diego HS at Pasadena HS
1929—San Diego HS at Glendale HS
1930—San Diego HS at San Diego HS
1931—Whittier HS at Whittier HS
1933—Whittier HS & San Diego HS tied at San Diego HS
1934—El Monte HS at El Monte HS
1935—Whittier HS at Whittier HS
1935—Whittier HS at Whittier HS
1936—San Diego HS at UCLA

The first year the CIF, SS supervised and directly sponsored the Southern California Wrestling Championship Tournament was in 1937. 1937-San Diego HS at Whittier HS 1938-Whittier HS at Inglewood HS 1939-San Diego HS at San Diego HS 1940-San Diego HS at Sherman Institute in Riverside 1941-San Diego HS at Whittier HS 1942-Whittier HS at Sherman Institute in Riverside 1943-Whittier HS at El Monte HS 1944-Whittier HS at Whittier HS 1945-San Diego HS at San Diego HS 1946-San Diego HS at El Centro HS 1947-San Diego HS & El Centro HS tied at Whittier HS 1948-El Centro HS at Hoover HS (SD) 1949-El Centro HS at Calexico HS 1950—San Diego HS at Inglewood HS 1951-San Diego HS at San Diego HS 1952-San Diego HS at Whittier HS 1953-San Diego HS at Hoover HS (SD) 1954-San Diego HS at Whittier HS 1955-Whittier HS at La Jolla HS 1956-Kearny HS at Hawthorne HS 1957-Kearny HS at California HS 1958-San Diego HS at Redondo HS 1959-Mira Costa HS at Mt. Miguel HS 1960-Pacific (SB) at Redondo HS 1961-California HS at Pacific HS (SB) 1962-South Torrance HS at Hawthorne HS

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# C. I. F., SOUTHERN SECTION MONTHLY BULLETIN

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# WHY EVERY BOY SHOULD WRESTLE

- 1. Wrestling is the most developmental of all interscholastic sports.
- 2. The individual character of wrestling makes victory or defeat a personal responsibility.
- 3. Wrestling is a contact sport that tests strength and endurance, condition and headwork, developing self-reliance, perseverance and mental alertness.
- Wrestling is a safe sport. The interscholastic rules provide that every hold or move which might endanger the life or injure a participant is absolutely prohibited and penalized.
- Contestants are matched according to weight, enabling boys of a size to compete in their own class.
- Wrestling is a natural test of strength, endurance and skill. It is considered, with the possible exception of track, the most natural activity in the sports program.
- Wrestling has special appeal because there is continual movement, constant change of positions and new combinations of holds in every move.
- 8. The activity conditions the body for a variety of other sports. It helps to develop coordination, speed, accuracy, balance, keeping muscles trim and pliable.
- 9. It is a sport which provides the physical exercise growing boys need.

The above article was reproduced from the National Federation Press XIX-2. Because of the tremendous growth in the wrestling program in the SS we are of the opinion that this article will be of interest to personnel of our member schools.



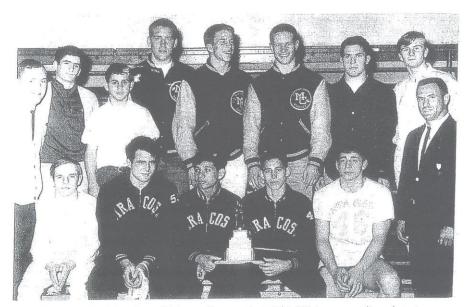


## JACK FERNANDEZ – WRESTLING COACH <u>CIFSS HALL OF FAME</u> <u>NATIONAL WRESTLING HALL OF FAME</u> <u>CALIFORNIA WRESTLING HALL OF FAME</u> <u>MIRA COSTA HIGH SCHOOL</u>



#### JACK FERNANDEZ

Jack amassed a phenomenal coaching dual meet record at Mira Costa High School of 223-34-1. In addition, his teams won 65 tournaments, 17 league championships and 5 CIF Southern titles. He coached record 22 individual CIF-SS champions and 57 other place winners. Jack officiated for 42 years including both the NCAA and the National AAU Championship tournaments. Because of his commitment and dedication to the sport of wrestling, Jack received many honors including South Bay and Southern California Coach of the year, National Coaches Association District 8 Wrestling Coach Of The Year, and he is the first Wrestling coach ever inducted into the CIF Southern Section Athletic Hall Of Fame.



TEAM TITLIST—Mira Costa High won its second straight CIF tream wrestling championship on Feb. 27 when the Mustangs scored 46 team points to easily out distance runner-up Aviation. Coach Jack Fernandez is at the right. Members of the team advancing to C F competition include: Ed Acosta, Curtis Alder, Joe Alvarado, Steve Edwards, Mike Fairless, Ralph Gambin, Charlie Kaufman, John Morris, Steve Verry, Pete Medley. (Photo courtesy A. G. Aldrich)

# **1940 - CIFSS WRESTLING FINALS**

# **105 POUND CLASS**

# BERT BROWN (INGLEWOOD) VS. J. MARTIN (WHITTIER)

#### **BROWN WINNER BY FALL**

